



Houses of Hope

Helping People Find A Better Way To Live.

February 12, 2010

Senator Ben Nelson
720 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

440 North 8th Street
Suite 120
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Senator Nelson,

This letter is in support of Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network's (SNBHIN) request for earmarked funds which would assist in the purchase of Electronic Health Record (EHR) applications to more fully integrate the Health Information Exchange (HIE) system currently in development for behavioral health providers in southeast Nebraska.

Houses of Hope provides behavioral health services in southeast Nebraska. An integrated health information exchange system will significantly improve our ability to treat Nebraska citizens with behavioral health conditions in a number of ways.

At Houses of Hope, our waiting list for behavioral health treatment services typically is comprised of 45 - 60 consumers who wait an average of 60 days before they can access services. Consumers may be on multiple waiting lists for behavioral health services some of which may or may not be appropriate. An integrated HIE system would provide us with an avenue to research the consumer's position on other agencies' waiting lists and promote communication with other behavioral health agencies to expedite the delivery of services based on consumer need.

SNBHIN's leadership in the development of an HIE system has been aggressive and successful. National, state, and local funding sources have invested in the HIE system and still more funds are needed. We urge you to consider an earmark for this project which will improve the efficiencies and effectiveness of the behavioral health system in Southeast Nebraska, provide a roadmap for the adoption of an HIE system for the rest of the state and most importantly improve the quality of life for Nebraska citizens with behavioral health conditions.

Sincerely,

Jason Conrad, LADC
Executive Director